2: Stefansson--232 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
304, 117

"Tattooing. The women, most or all, tattooed. The lines down the forehead are (the two) everywhere equidistant (about 1/4 in.) from each other, go half way down the nose, and are, the inner, one inch, the outer 1 1/2 inch, apart where they end at the roots of the hair. The only old woman here has her forehead bald an inch or two back, and the lines end where her hair formerly ended. The eye design varied. The cheek lines I have seen did not vary. They extend from nostrils slanting up to ear, meet at nose and are about quarter of an inch apart at ear. The chin lines I have seen varied from five to seven and equidistant in pairs."

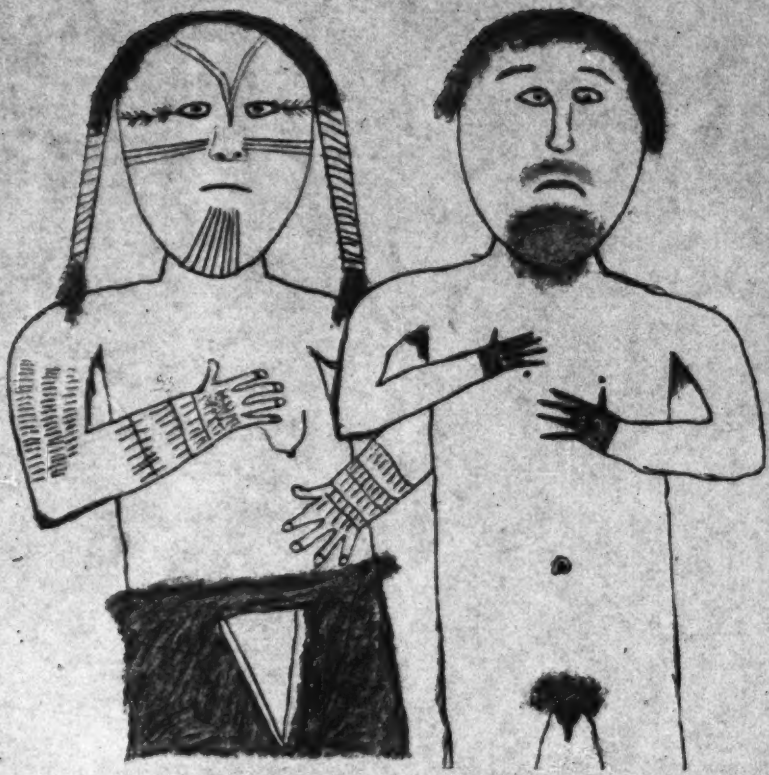
2: Stefansson--232-233 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
304, 117

"Tattooing. The most common number of chin lines is five. The lines are in general quarter of an inch apart at top and half an inch at bottom, being all curved but the middle one. They begin about one-half inch below [233] edge of lip mucous and end where they would disappear from the view of a person whose eyes were on a level with those of the wearer. The hand designs seem to be unlimited in number and form. A rather common one is an M-shaped figure across the back of the hand. The back of the hand is pretty well covered. The arrow-heads at the eye angles decrease in size backward from the eyes generally. The point of the arrows is somewhere between the line of the angle of the eye and that of the upper brim of the lower eyelid when the eye is open. The cheek lines are parallel till about two inches from the nose, when they converge. In one case they do not meet. The nearest arrow point is about in the wrinkle, usually, of the angle when the eye is closed tight. The inner of the forehead lines meet and end abruptly at the line of the inner ends of the eyebrows; the outer meet just below angle of eyes at top of nose and are prolonged down, Y-fashion to the middle of the nose. Have seen no tattoo on men."

3: Rasmussen--opposite 269 (c. 1923) 1932

116, 151, 304, 844

Copper Eskimo



Man and woman, drawn by Netsit.

Only the women are tattooed, never the men. It is always the same patterns that are used, and they have the following names: Lines on the forehead: qaujät, i. e. "brow lines". At the eyes: e'nitit i. e. "those at the eyes". uluagutit: "those at the cheeks". tavlɔrutit: "those at the chin". algʌrutit: "those on the hands". akhäkrɔrutit: "those on the upper arm". — Of the necessity of tattooing to women they say: ulɔrianaⁱlʌq atɔrniʌrpa' kakinʌqʌrume, nutʌ́rqinialʌrume: If one is afraid of being tattooed one will have much worse pains when the child is coming. In other words: tattooing makes for easy childbirth.

12: Collinson--285 (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo
304

"The women are slightly tattooed, low of stature (one a mother being but 4 feet 3 inches high)"

12: Collinson--286 [2] (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo
116, 415, 411, 304, 152

"Their arms, lamps, and other utensils correspond with Sir E. Parry's description; during the winter, the bow with its cover and quiver is left at home, and a short spear tipped with bone carried in lieu. Among their caches in the inner harbour were two or three triangular pieces of wood fitted with slings for the arm, and apparently designed to act as a kind of shield; one of the principal men among them was scarred severely across one side of his face, but I could not make out whether it was done in war or not; they at first with us carried their knives with the blade up their sleeves, and the haft in the hand, in readiness for immediate use; but notwithstanding the dread of our firearms may have kept them quiet, I am inclined to think they are an inoffensive race."

Trousers. Women, like men, wore two pairs of trousers (*nalikkak*) in winter, and only the inner pair in summer; but as their stocking covered more of the leg than the men's, their trousers were shorter and did not reach the knees. 291 192

The inner pair was rarely if ever decorated. The outer often had coloured stripes down the outside of each leg, and, in the middle of the front, a triangular gusset of white fur, with its two sides parallel to the white or coloured edges of the stockings. To enhance the symmetry of the arrangement these two sides also carried at times an edging of coloured bands (Figure 29). 291 531

So far as I know, women never used drawstrings on their trousers, but secured them with a sealskin thong fitted with loop and toggle. 291

Shoes, Socks, and Mittens. These were in no way different from those worn by men. Women, of course, did not possess the long working mittens that reached half-way up the forearm.

Waterboots. The woman's waterboot (Figure 30) had the shape of the stocking beneath it, which above the foot differed entirely from a man's boot or stocking. After fitting tightly around the ankle it expanded rapidly upward, attaining just above the knee a diameter of from 10 inches to over a foot. The outer side of the boot (or stocking) then tapered to form a wide strap that tucked over the belt holding up the trousers.

In the foot it did not differ from a man's boot. Like a man's, too, the leg had only one seam, straight up the middle; but in so large an expanse of skin there were generally two or three holes, from wounds and other causes, that required covering with round patches.

Outer Stockings. The waterboot replaced in summer the outer stocking (*ipiya.k*) of caribou fur, which bore the same peculiar shape as the boot, but was frequently decorated after the manner of the man's outer stocking. Commonly all the upper edge, from the inside of the knee to the top of the strap that tucked into the belt, was bordered with several parallel rows in red, white, and black (either the black or the red, but more commonly the red, might be omitted). From the strap to the foot, down the front of the leg, ran another broad band, similarly coloured, and a third, or else two or three rather narrow bands inserted an inch or two apart, extended half-way around the ankle or completely encircled it (*See* Figure 31). There were numerous modifications of this pattern, however, as in the patterns on men's stockings. For example, the coloured stripes varied greatly in number; they were often replaced by broad or narrow bands of white caribou fur; and the decoration down the front of the leg was frequently omitted (*See* Figure 32). 292 531 [192]

The feet of both outer and inner stockings were made preferably from caribou leg skins, but not infrequently from marmot fur. In spring some women replaced them with feet of haired sealskin. The rest of the garment was derived from the body fur of the caribou. 291 292 237

Inner Stockings. These corresponded in shape with the outer, and bore the same name, *ipiya.k*, but were almost invariably plain. In fact, I have seen only one decorated pair, a specimen that came from Prince Albert Sound. It bore the usual red, white, and black stripes, but they were inserted on the hairless, unattractive side, as the stocking was worn with the fur side in. Around the ankle was an additional design, the YII pattern that women tattooed on their arms and etched on their needle-cases, here produced by running stitches of very narrow sealskin (Figure 33). This design was very rare on garments, but occurred also on a woman's coat and on a pair of women's outer stockings that we bought in Coronation Gulf. 291 531 [192] [304] [294] [126]

bone, and seldom exceeded 4 inches in length. The teeth, which generally numbered from five to seven, were cut with the man's grooving tool, and a hole was nearly always drilled in the upper end for attaching the article to the needle-case. Most combs were simply cut off in a blunt point at the top, and though at times this shape was slightly modified, there was never any attempt at ornamental carving. Even the surface was rarely etched, and then only with two or three straight lines or with the ring-and-dot pattern. Typical specimens are shown in Figure 42.

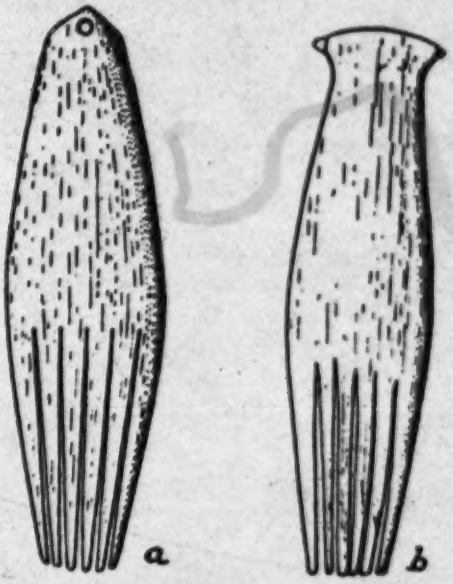


Figure 42. Women's combs. IV.D.1693, 895. 1/1.

Snow goggles (Figure 43), made of wood or antler, had the shape usual among all Eskimos. Projecting brow-pieces to intercept light from above were not uncommon. The cord was of sinew or sealskin. The slits were of even width, rarely widened at the inner end as in many goggles from Hudson Bay. Ornamentation was absent.[1]

Tattooing. The appearance of the women was greatly affected by tattooing. Only two men were seen with tattoo marks, which in both cases consisted of two short lines across the bridge of the nose. The marks on one man, a native from Coppermine River, had no significance that I could discover. He stated himself that they were due to an arbitrary whim, but I strongly suspect that

[1] See Plate VI in Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, pt. B, p. 72B.

304 755 there was a magical reason at the back of it and that they were made to cure some ailment. The other man was Ilatsiak, a shaman of Bathurst Inlet.[1] He asserted that a woman made the tattoo marks on his nose as he lay dead, in order to bring him back to life; that is to say, they were made in the course of a religious séance.

293

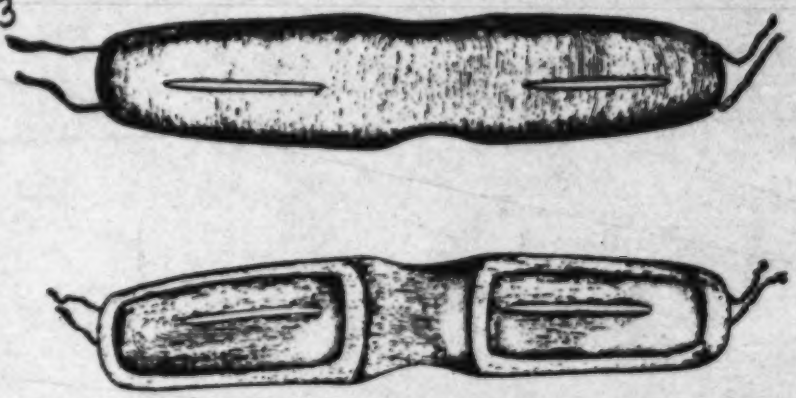


Figure 43. Snow goggles. IV.D.806. Approx. 1/1.

304 Tattooing on women had no religious significance; it was merely a time-honoured method of adornment to which every member of the sex submitted willingly. Face, hands, and arms were marked with certain stereotyped patterns, which were only slightly modified according to the whim of the individual. Usually the process was commenced a year or so before marriage and completed a year or two afterwards; but occasionally one encountered a young married woman with almost no tattooing, and a still younger maiden completely tattooed.

Figure 44. Women's face tattooing.

Just as there were no fixed rules regarding the exact time for the process, so there were no definite ceremonies surrounding it; the girl often made some of the lines herself on her hands and wrists, but generally they were made by a

[1] For an account of this man see "The Life of the Copper Eskimos", p. 92, vol. XII, Report of Canadian Arctic Expedition.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 54]

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

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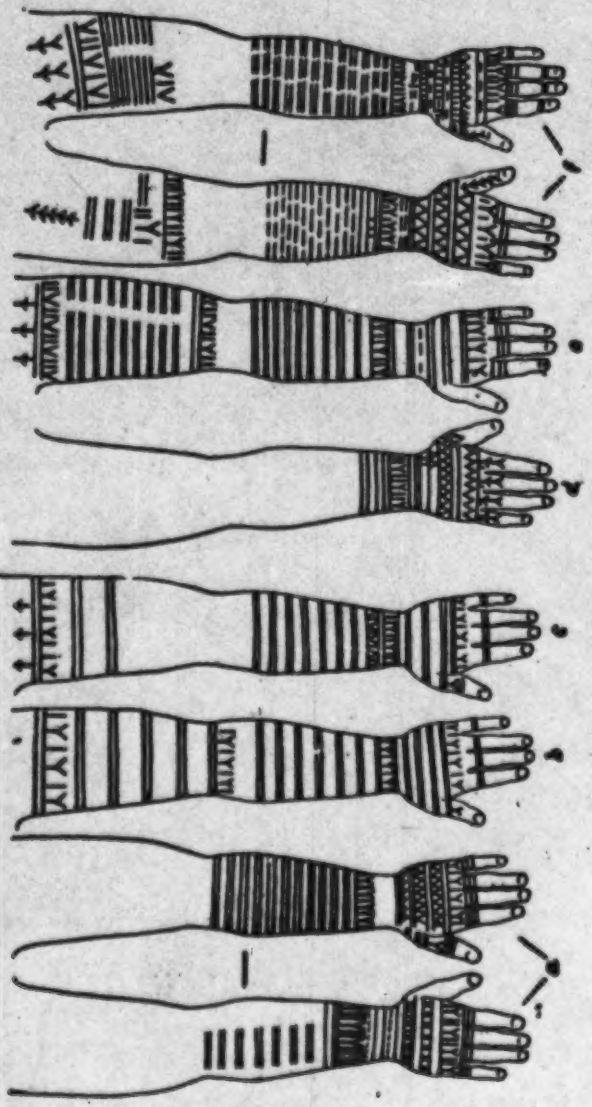

Figure 41. Arm and hand tattooing.

304 female friend or relative. There seemed to be no compulsion in the matter
[626] beyond public opinion and a woman's natural desire to follow the current methods of adornment. A young married woman in the Tree River group refused to allow her face to be tattooed at all on the ground that the process was too
[832] painful; but as she was only 17 years of age her aversion may have been overcome later. The average girl was rather eager to be tattooed in order to increase her charms.

The Copper Eskimo employed the process usual among other Eskimo tribes; they passed under the skin a copper sewing needle threaded with sinew dipped in lampblack. For dots, however, and sometimes also for lines, they did not thread the needle (but inserted into the puncture a sharp wooden stick dipped in lampblack. Only a few marks could be made at one time because the operation was very painful. Most girls began on the backs of the hands and on the forehead.

304 The designs consisted of series of parallel lines, zigzag and spur bands. On
531 the face the usual marks were double V's in the middle of the forehead, two or three connected "spurs" running from the corner of each eye, two parallel lines across each cheek, and five lines radiating from the lower lip to the chin (*See*
[177] Figure 44). Three parallel lines on each cheek instead of two, and from six to ten lines on the chin were seen on several women, nearly all of whom came from the eastern end of Coronation Gulf; doubtless, these unusual numbers were due to the influence of the Netsilik Eskimo farther east. On the arms the marks were usually confined to the outer surface (Figure 45); they seldom extended
[755] above the elbow, or completely around the lower arm. Tattooing of the legs, after the manner of the eastern natives, was not practised, although a woman in Dolphin and Union Strait was said to have tattooed two small lines on her thigh to remove a painful swelling. A Prince Albert Sound woman had a short line tattooed on her left breast, for what reason I did not discover.

302 We neither saw nor heard of any painting of the face or body other than a few streaks made in jest with a piece of charcoal.

ART

In the field of art the Copper Eskimo accomplished far less than their kinsmen in the eastern and western Arctic, not because they lacked the same gifts, but rather because they failed to develop them. In the decoration of their clothing they displayed a feeling for line and colour, a sense of balance and harmonious composition not surpassed by any other Eskimo group. They demanded symmetry in everything. The insertions on their coats, trousers, and stockings, and the arrangement of the lemming skin pendants, all were governed by this passion for symmetry. Thus, a woman who was sewing two pairs of caribou ears to the shoulders of her coat spaced them at even distances, with the larger pair on the outside and the smaller pair within at a slightly lower level. Symmetry governed also the shapes of many implements. No Eskimo group made trimmer tools and weapons, toggles, and buckles; and the splicing of wood, especially of arrow shafts, was amazingly accurate.

One may believe, therefore, that they possessed in full measure the artistic talents of other Eskimo, but that fashion kept these talents latent. They could have produced the delicate carvings and engravings in bone and ivory that we find in Alaska, and, to a lesser extent, in the eastern Arctic, but the impulse was lacking. They did, it is true, engrave a few simple designs, and make a few rough carvings, mainly for fishing lines and needle-cases; but the "picture-writing" of the western Eskimo, and the naturalistic shapes given to toggles, drum handles, and many other objects were conspicuously absent.

Weaving, except the finger braiding of sinew for sealing lines, was an unknown art, and painting almost equally unknown. The runners of two sleds bore a series of Y designs painted in red and black on their fore ends; otherwise, paint served only to colour skin. Needle-cases and bow-case handles usually bore engraved lines, but other objects only occasionally. The principal designs are shown in Figure 187. The ring-and-dot pattern was not very common, and

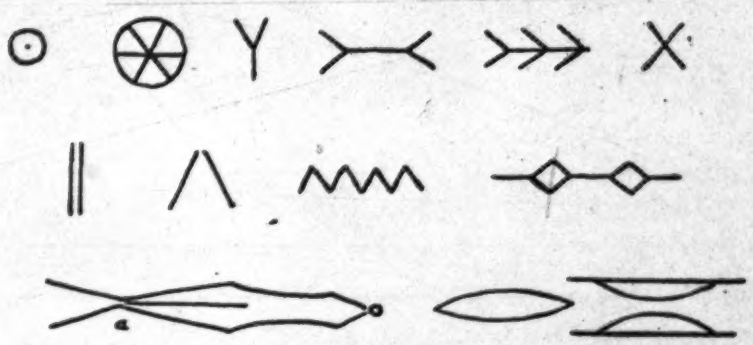

Figure 187. Typical design elements of the Copper Eskimo.

the diagonal lines inside a circle I saw only on a button (Figure 37b). The standard patterns were parallel straight lines and a Y in various combinations; these two were tattooed on the face and wrists (Figures 44, 45), painted, as stated above, on two sleds, inset as strips of fur or skin in the clothing (Figures 28, 29), and engraved on many small bone objects. Fully 60 per cent of the needle-cases were decorated with two Y patterns end to end inside a frame of straight lines (Figures 94, 95, 96), and the commonest design on bow-case handles (Figure 158) was another combination of the Y figure. Radiating lines (two or more), and sigzags, were not common except in tattooing. Rarer still were

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

face besmirched with blood and blubber from the tit-bits she slipped into her mouth, made a somewhat unattractive picture to our European eyes, though the Eskimos thought it charmingly homelike. But as soon as she finished her task she washed with snow, dried her face and hands with a ptarmigan skin, braided her hair, and changed into a neat suit of brown caribou fur adorned with red and white insertion. In this new setting she shone with quite a different radiance; for her face, though almost circular, was so regular, and her complexion so fresh and clear, that even the blue tattoo lines with which all the Eskimo women in this country marred their faces only added piquancy to her charms. If Girling had consented to carry out his missionary duties we would certainly have christened her the "Boreal Venus."

These natives had been in close contact with Anderson's party during the summer and regarded all white men with the greatest respect. When they learned that we intended to stay with them for a few days they renovated an empty hut for our use and equipped it with a stone lamp, which the women supplied with oil and tended night and morning. They, too, like the people we had just left, had suffered from starvation for several weeks; but now their hunters were killing more seals, and as the days lengthened they looked confidently forward to a season of plenty. Their leader and his wife almost embarrassed us with hospitality.